



National Brownfields Assessment Pilot

Cowpens, SC

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

OVERVIEW

EPA has selected the Town of Cowpens as a Brownfields Pilot. Cowpens established a textile mill at the turn of the century and chemicals were increasingly used to advance the industry. In the late 1960s, a major textile dying and finishing company moved into the area. In 1990 the company declared bankruptcy, closed the facility, and left town, eliminating 400 jobs in the process. The closing of this facility, complicated by possible environmental contamination and on-site vandalism, has had a devastating economic impact on the town.

The pilot site is an abandoned, 228,000 square-foot textile facility located on 70 acres within the town limits. Economic problems faced by Cowpens include unemployment and low earnings. Of the 930 households, 261 have no earnings, and the per capita income is \$9,844. For the past seven years, the town has not received property taxes from the abandoned facility. Several industrial prospects have investigated the site, but have not chosen to redevelop it based on initial investigations and unknown environmental conditions, including possible groundwater and soil contamination.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Cowpens, South Carolina

Date of Award:
April 1997

Amount: \$200,000

Site Profile: A 228,000 square-foot abandoned textile facility located on 70 acres will be the focus of the pilot.

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Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

OBJECTIVES

Cowpens' goal is to obtain technical assistance to evaluate and assess environmental contamination in the pilot area. Extensive testing was initiated at the site, but further site assessment is necessary. The town also plans to use the pilot as a means for identifying methods to fund remediation and to develop a comprehensive reuse strategy.

ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this pilot include:

- Conducting site assessment and developing a plan for cleanup and redevelopment;
- Installing 10 to 20 groundwater wells to monitor contaminant plumes in two aquifers;
- Conducting community outreach and environmental education, with support from Clemson University and Spartanburg Technical College; and
- Working in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.